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ABSTRACT

Based on the theme of assessment, this proceedings presents papers and discussions from the annual meeting of the Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication (CPTSC). Three papers in the proceedings discussing curricula are: "Model(s) for Educating Professional Communicators" (Marilyn M. Cooper); "Summary of Discussion of Model(s) for Educating Professional Communicators" (Karen A. Schriver); "Summary of Discussion of Model(s) for Educating Professionals Who Communicate" (Daniel Riordan). Four papers discussing program assessment are: "Reassessing Program Assessment: The Other Side of the Coin" (Carol S. Lipson); "Measuring Institutional Culture: An Anthropological Approach to Assessment (Response to 'Reassessing Program Assessment: The Other Side of the Coin')" (Carole Yee); "Evaluating Service Programs in Scientific and Technical Communication: How Can Qualitative Research Help Us?" (Jimmie Killingsworth); and "Summary of Discussion of Papers on Program Assessment" (Henrietta Nickels Shirk). The proceedings also includes a message from the president of CPTSC, the conference program, and results of the annual business meeting. Appendixes presenting the constitution, a list of meeting sites and dates, a list of members, and a list of ERIC document numbers for past proceedings of the CPTSC. (RS)

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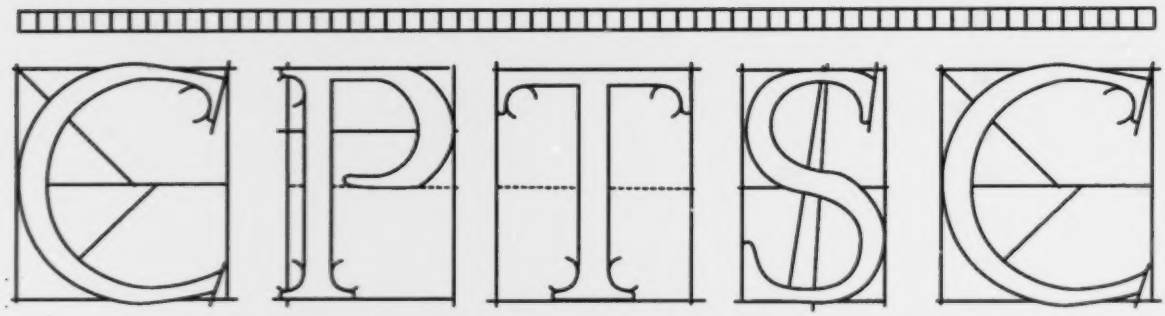

The Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication

Proceedings
1990

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PROCEEDINGS

The Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication

17th Annual Conference

San Diego, California
October 11-13, 1990

James P. Zappen
Executive Editor

Susan Katz
Managing Editor

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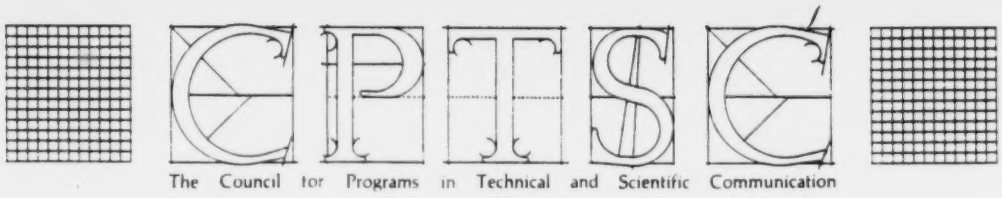

PROGRAM

17TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
COUNCIL FOR PROGRAMS IN TECHNICAL
AND SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATION

October 11, 12, and 13, 1990
Catamaran Resort Hotel, San Diego, California
Host: Department of English & Comparative Literature
San Diego State University

CONFERENCE THEME: ASSESSMENT

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11

7:00 p.m. Reception and Program Display, Toucan Room
Exhibits by interested participants

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12

7:45 a.m. Breakfast, Toucan Room

8:30 a.m. Greeting and introductions

Sherry Burgus Little, San Diego State University
Albert W. Johnson, Vice President for Academic Affairs,
San Diego State University
Marilyn Schauer Samuels, Case Western Reserve University

MORNING SESSION: Papers and Discussion on Curricula, Toucan Room

9:15 a.m. Paper: Model(s) for Educating Professional Communicators

Speaker: Marilyn Cooper, Michigan Technological University

9:35 a.m. Discussion

Facilitator: Jo Allen, East Carolina University
Recorder: Karen Schriver, Carnegie Mellon University

10:15 a.m. Break

10:30 a.m. Paper: Model(s) for Educating Professionals Who Communicate

Speaker: JoAnn Hackos, Comtech Services

10:50 a.m. Discussion

Facilitator: Sam Geonetta, University of Cincinnati
Recorder: Dan Riordan, University of Wisconsin-Stout
Respondent: Jan H. Spyridakis, University of Washington

12:00 p.m. Lunch (on your own)

AFTERNOON SESSION: Papers and Discussion on Program Assessment

2:00 p.m. Paper: Assessing Programs for Educating Professional Communicators

Speaker: Carol Lipson, Syracuse University
Respondent: Carole Yee, New Mexico Tech

2:20 p.m. Paper: Assessing Programs for Educating Professionals Who Communicate

Speaker: M. Jimmie Killingsworth, Texas A & M University

2:40 p.m. Discussion

Facilitator: Laurie Hayes, University of Minnesota
Recorder: Henrietta Nickels Shirk, Northeastern University

3:45 p.m. Presentation by the Program Review Board Planning Committee

Speaker: Billie Wahlstrom, University of Minnesota

4:00 p.m. Free time

6:30 p.m. Banquet, Board Room

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13

Breakfast (on your own)

9:00 a.m. Annual Business Meeting, Toucan Room

12:00-3:00 p.m. Luncheon on board the Bahia Belle and cruise of Mission Bay

President's Address: "Navigating the Future"
Speaker: Marilyn Schauer Samuels
Installation of new officers

Papers and Discussion on Curricula

Marilyn M. Cooper
Michigan Technological University
Paper delivered at CPTSC, October 1990, San Diego

Model(s) for Educating Professional Communicators

I want to begin by saying that this assignment, to talk about how we should educate professional communicators, is a difficult one for me. As I thought about what I would say, I had two main worries: first, I worried that you would expect me to come up with a definitive model or models, complete with curricular requirements, which was something I didn't think I could do or would want to do; and, second, I worried about the notion of professional communicators, a notion I have always eyed with profound distrust. I know this isn't a very promising beginning, but ever since I read Hegel I always seem to have to start with the negative.

My reluctance to talk about definitive model programs for educating anyone stems from my belief that all successful programs are site-specific, that what works at one university with one group of students and faculty at one time probably won't work at another university with other students and faculty at other times. I really like the graduate program in rhetoric and technical communication we have put together at Michigan Tech, and I think it is a model program for educating professional communicators, but a lot of its characteristics are due to site-specific features, the most important of which being that it is located in a humanities department at a technological university. Being in a humanities department allowed -- and required -- us to build a highly interdisciplinary program; being at a technological university

allowed -- and required -- us to focus on the problem of communication within a technological society; and being in a humanities department at a technological university allowed us a great deal more freedom in building an unusual, perhaps radical, program than we would have had were we in a more prestigious, discipline oriented university. We didn't have to worry about stepping on people's toes and living up to rigid expectations. Other smaller and larger factors also make this program work well for us, factors ranging from the interests of the current faculty to the openness to interdisciplinary programs in American academia right now to the state of the world's economy. But as much as I like our program and enjoy recommending it as a model, I don't think it is the only possible model, or even one of a small set of acceptable models. In fact, I think it's a model program only in the sense that it seems ideal to us. The question of how to effectively educate professional communicators is one that will be answered differently in every specific situation. This is really the most important thing I want to say. Still, I know that as program administrators, we need other answers to this question than that, if only because we need a basis on which to answer the question to be addressed later today about how we are to assess programs that educate professional communicators.

So what I'd like to try to do is to address this question obliquely, through considering the notion of professional communicators. If we can come to some agreement about what professional communicators are supposed to do, what function they best serve in our society, then perhaps we can agree on not the specific shape of curricula to educate them but at least a general idea of what they need to know, which they can learn in a great variety of ways and through a great variety of methods. This means that I have to deal with my

second worry, which is really the bigger one, about exactly what a professional communicator is and does.

One of the sources of my distrust of the notion of professional communicators is, of course, Plato. Socrates' attacks on the rhetor in *Phaedrus* and on the rhapsode in *Ion* are easy to translate into modern day terms as attacks on the professional communicator. Socrates tells Phaedrus that rhetoric "is no art, but a knack that has nothing to do with art" (*Collected Dialogues*, p. 506), and he tells Ion that since rhapsodes have no knowledge of anything directly, they must be considered to be possessed, inspired by a divine madness, if they are not to be considered liars (pp. 227-28). Similarly, the professional communicator can easily be seen as someone with a knack for communicating something he or she has no direct knowledge of, and since our contemporary society has even less regard for divine madness than did Socrates, professional communicators are liable to be thought of as liars, or at least as distorters of truth. It is the danger of the combination of skill at persuasion with ignorance of the truth that Plato is most concerned with; as Socrates asks Phaedrus,

> Then when a master of oratory, who is ignorant of good and evil, employs his power of persuasion on a community as ignorant as himself . . . by extolling evil as being really good, and when by studying the beliefs of the masses he persuades them to do evil instead of good, what kind of crop do you think his oratory is likely to reap from the seed thus sown? (pp. 505-06).

I think we've seen this happen quite recently in our country, when our most famous "professional communicator" convinced an ignorant community that lower taxes for the rich was a good thing and thus single-handedly created the problem of the national debt. It might seem that the most obvious way to avoid

such catastrophes is the way Socrates recommends: to remedy the lack of knowledge of professional communicators by making them all philosophers, lovers of the truth. But I've never much liked Socrates' solutions.

Instead, I'm going to take a cue from one of my colleagues, Dale Sullivan, who in an article in the current issue of *Journal of Advanced Composition* entitled "Political-Ethical Implications of Defining Technical Communication as a Practice" argues that we must encourage students to see communication as a virtuous practice, not a knack or a skill. Sullivan, building on the work of Michael Halloran and Carolyn Miller, begins with Aristotle's distinction between *techne*, the ability to produce products, and *praxis*, the ability to take social action. *Techne* is what most students in technical writing classes think they need and what a great many students in scientific and technical communication programs both at the undergraduate and graduate level also think they need. But what Dale thinks they need, and I do too, is *praxis*. He says, "the definition of rhetoric as social act or practice . . . brings rhetoric out of the amoral realm of technique into the world of ethics and politics" (p. 378). I would go a little farther and say that to see rhetoric -- or communication -- as a social act is to demystify it, to uncover the fact that even when communication is conceived as technique it has moral implications.

What do professional communicators need to know in order to be able to take responsible social action? Sullivan points out that *praxis* "involves the virtue of practical wisdom or prudence *(phronesis)*, a virtue defined as the ability to reason about ends rather than means . . . . to be concerned [not with the production of products but] with the uses to which products are put" (pp. 377-78). Since practical wisdom is a virtue, Sullivan points out, it "automatically embodies good ends [and] . . . must be used for good" (p. 378).

For Aristotle the good is defined as the ability to conform to the ideals of society, and practical wisdom, thus, is the application of what everyone agrees are ideals to the problem of deciding the uses to which products are to be put. But here Dale runs into a dilemma: today many of us are not crazy about the agreed-upon ideals of the dominant society which, as he puts it, subordinates human beings to the technological imperative (p. 379), and we do not see the ability to conform to these ideals as good. Thus Dale resigns himself to teaching technical writing in such a way that "it at once teaches the discourse appropriate for the technological world *and* makes students aware of the values embedded in such discourse and the dehumanizing aspects of it" (p. 379).

I would like to hold onto the notion of practical wisdom as essential to professional communicators; I think we must cultivate in our students in scientific and technical communication programs the ability to apply the ideals of our society to answering questions about the best uses for communication technologies and forums, for example. And I agree with Dale that the ideals, or values, of the technological society are dehumanizing. But I do not think we have to choose the schizophrenic pedagogical practice of advocating and critiquing the dominant discourse at one and the same time. The alternatives that he sees are conditioned by the notion that a society always is -- or at least should be -- uniform, and that responsible social action depends on this uniformity (certainly the classical world saw it this way too). Following Habermas and Ellul, he conceives our society as dominated by the technological imperative. All values not arising from the dominant system are seen as merely the product of "alternative social groups," which, though they agree on opposing the dominant technological society, are too diverse to overthrow the dominant system. This leads us to the conclusion that practical

wisdom cannot be based on the values of these alternative groups because there is not enough agreement on what is good.

The way out of this dilemma, I think, requires a reconception of the notion of society, of the functioning of discourse within society, and of the basis of practical wisdom that enables *praxis*. Unlike Dale, I don't think that our society is uniform, that the technological imperative is the only basis of practical wisdom. I find much more persuasive the theories of Antonio Gramsci and Stuart Hall, who argue that a society's values are established in the struggle between competing groups and that the site of this struggle is often in discourse and in other systems of representation. According to Gramsci, societies will periodically become more or less uniform through a process of the establishment of hegemonies, alliances of groups of people who have been persuaded to the values of a leading group (largely through the activities of the group's intellectuals who can communicate these values and relate them to the values of the other groups).

Stuart Hall calls this process of the establishment of hegemony articulation, a term that emphasizes the ongoing nature of the process. I envision articulation as being like crystal formation in supersaturated liquids: at a critical moment, a system that was only latent "catches on," so to speak, and reconfigures large parts of the whole. Hall emphasizes that such large articulated structures are extremely difficult to achieve and also hard to maintain:

> "hegemony" is a very particular, historically specific, and temporary "moment" in the life of a society. It is rare for this degree of unity to be achieved . . . . Such periods of "settlement" are unlikely to persist forever. There is nothing automatic about

them. They have to be actively constructed and positively maintained. (1986, p. 15)

The ideals of a society, thus, are not pregiven, nor established once and for all at some point, but are always in the process of being constructed and reconstructed through the struggle involved in the winning of public consent.

Hall does acknowledge that the power to construct and maintain hegemony is not equally distributed throughout society; the gist of his complaint against Foucault's treatment of power is Foucault's neglect of the overwhelming power of the State. Hall says,

> The function of the State is, in part, precisely to bring together or articulate into a complexly structured instance, a range of political discourses and social practices which are concerned at different sites with the transmission and transformation of power -- some of those practices having little to do with the political domain as such, being concerned with other domains which are nevertheless articulated to the State, for example, familial life, civil society, gender and economic relations. The State is the instance of the performance of a condensation which allows that site of intersection between different practices to be transformed into a systematic practice of regulation, of rule and norm, of normalization, within society. (1985, p. 93)

Though the function of the State is to achieve an articulated structure, this is not to say that the State always succeeds or ever succeeds more than in part. There are always other articulations forming in society, and, at a critical moment, when a dominant hegemony is losing its ability to convince other

groups of its necessity, a new hegemony forms. Nor is the State the only group that strives to achieve such articulations.

What this means is that at all times, even when a society seems most uniformly dominated by a hegemony, that hegemony is the product of ongoing success at winning consent, and at all times in society alternative ideals, the products of alternative articulations, are available. It would seem that practical wisdom could not have a place in such a society, and I suppose in the purely classical sense it could not. How is it possible to reason about ends rather than means when we can get no firm or lasting agreement on what are good ends? Does this not leave us back with the notion of communication as a knack, a skill at winning consent rather than the imparting of truth? I don't think so. We can still reason about ends, discussing among ourselves and across groups our differing conceptions of what would be good outcomes and eventually arriving at some agreement, however temporary. This process of reasoning about ends is still different from the process in which we focus our attention only on the means, and the process of reasoning about ends is still a virtue. In fact, this process might be seen as an even more appropriate virtue for us to cultivate than the classical concept of practical wisdom in that it helps us realize that values are based in human decisions about what is good, and thus it impresses upon us our responsibility for creating and maintaining a good society.

I want to call this modern day virtue -- the process of reasoning together about ends -- communication, and I want to define the function of professional communicators in these terms. Professional communicators are those people whose job it is to assure that in any endeavor all groups involved in or affected by the endeavor engage in the process of reasoning together about ends, about how the endeavor will affect individuals, groups of people,

systems and structures, in the present and in the future, with the goal of assuring that the outcome of any endeavor is a positive good in society. Neither is their role one of simply making sure that this process occurs. Professional communicators are the ones who do the reasoning together; they serve the function that Gramsci saw intellectuals serving in the establishment of expansive hegemonies, hegemonies in which the leading group takes account of the interests and needs of the other groups. Professional communicators are the points of contact between such groups; they are, in fact, the only site in which this process of reasoning can take place. They are -- or must be -- the organic intellectuals of the groups they represent, intellectuals who are of the group and who represent the group's interests and values. Whether they are document designers, or teachers, or press agents, or media consultants, or actors, or software developers, or scholars, or judges, or legislative representatives, or editors, or writers, their function is, as Gramsci puts it, "directive and organisational, i.e. educative, i.e. intellectual" (p. 16). What they are is communicators; what they do is to manufacture consent -- but they manufacture consent by reasoning together about ends, rather than by manipulating public opinion.[1]

The role that I've sketched out for professional communicators depends on a particular definition of communication. Raymond Williams has pointed out that:

> In controversy about communications systems and communication theory it is often useful to recall the unresolved range of the original noun of action, represented at its extremes by *transmit*, a one-way process, and *share*, (cf. **communion** and especially **communicant**), a common or mutual process. The intermediate senses -- make common to many, and impart -- can

> be read in either direction, and the choice of direction is often crucial. Hence the attempt to generalize the distinction in such contrasted phrases as **manipulative communication(s)** and **participatory communication(s)**. (pp. 72-73)

Obviously, I am defining communication as participatory communication, and the role of professional communicators as one of sharing interests, or working together to create common interests, to construct the ideals of our society, to examine the ends of action. Professionals who communicate should be involved in this endeavor too, but perhaps we cannot require them to make it their full time occupation. It is the function of professional communicators -- whether they know it or not. Our task as the educators of professional communicators is to make sure they know it.

How are we to make sure they know it? This is probably where you hoped I would begin my discussion. But, after all, I have just been arguing that the concern of professional communicators is with ends rather than means, and as educators we must surely think of ourselves as professional communicators. My only advice is to find whatever means it takes. As I said at the beginning, all that I am sure of is that those means will vary with the specifics of every situation -- and that is something our students should know too. As to how we will know whether our programs are good ones, whether we have succeeded, I would suggest that we consider the ends, or effects of our programs. What are their stated goals? What do our faculty say about what they want to achieve? What do our students say? For in the long view, the measure of our success is the kind of society our graduates make.

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Summary of Discussion

Karen A. Schriver
Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and Document Design
Carnegie Mellon University

In the discussion of Marilyn Cooper's paper "Models for Educating Professional Communicators," the audience raised a number of issues and questions. Cooper argued that professional communicators should be more concerned with political "ends" than "means" or "methods."

The Audience's Questions and Comments and Cooper's Answers:

Q1: What does hegemony mean?

A1: Establishing public consent.

Q2: If we wanted to know what this would look like in terms of a research mission, what would you say?

A2: It depends. . .I have a student who is exploring issues of control in hypertext. A political or apolitical stance is not a choice--all contexts are political. Students must take a stand. We must teach students to take power within companies.

C1: Writers at IBM are getting more power in the information development process. IBM sees writers as advocating the user's needs in the planning and information development process. Usability is coming into its own. Many people are now trained in human factors and cognitive science. We realize that we have been simplifying the engine at the expense of complicating the interface. Writers have helped us to see that it is better to complicate the engine at the expense of simplifying the interface.

A3: There is a kind of naive political content to many technical communication courses. We need to represent the plurality of ethics and morals.

C2: We need to raise different concerns in the curriculum but within the courses we currently teach. We do not need to add new courses to make them more politically responsible, because taking on a new question does not mean abandoning the old ones. We still need plenty of education on skills and knowledge. It just means enlarging our purview of what we teach.

C3: We have a problem that some critical theory makes students feel inept and that it makes students who enroll in

technical communication programs feel like "bootlickers" to those in power.

C4: We need to figure out our own ethics before we tell students ways to figure out their own.

C5: We don't need to be singular in our advising.

C6: Case studies on ethics have not been very useful at all.

C7: Some schools don't consider this political stuff. Some schools are considered "feeder schools" into industry and just focus on the skills.

C8: There is a tension between "the academy" and "industry" in terms of concerns. What academics want to teach is not what business wants.

C9: Do technical communication programs teach interpersonal skills? Some say "yes" and cite courses; some say "no" and argue that we cannot teach "speaking" directly but that it comes as a composite output growing from experience, skills, and courses in technical and professional communication.

C10: Are we talking about training students for the "greater good"?

C11: Of what? For what?

As the comments from above show, Cooper's talk stimulated discussion on the topic of increasing students' sensitivities to ethical issues in communication. The audience disagreed a great deal about what it means to teach ethics in the writing classroom as well as about its role in industry. Most felt that instructors needed a better understanding of ethics before they could teach it and worried that they were neither qualified nor trained to teach ethics. Even so, they recognized the need to know more about the role of ethics in technical and scientific communication. It appeared that the majority of the audience wanted a more exhaustive treatment of the topic and that some were dissatisfied with treating the issue in the abstract and from the perspective of literary theory. However, others raised the point that even case studies of ethics that were from the field of technical communication were not particularly useful. Members of the audience reported that they expected the presenter would say less about ethics in literary criticism and much more about ethics in rhetoric and technical communication. The audience was interested in ways that program administrators in technical and scientific communication can develop curricula that will help students to recognize and solve ethical problems both in and out of the classroom.

Summary of Discussion

Daniel Riordan
Director of Professional Writing
University of Wisconsin-Stout

Introduction

The discussion after the presentation by Joanne Hackos explored two main themes: teaching in universities and teaching in industry. For each theme the participants made many helpful comments, tending to raise concerns rather than focus on answers.

Teaching in Universities

For the discussion of teaching in universities the key issue was the definition of technical communication as a profession. The participants, trying to deal with this issue, centered their comments on four broad areas of technical communication programs: the definition of technical writing, general preparation, technical requirements, and the service course.

The definition of technical writing

Technical communication is a young field , not yet clearly defined, but one which demands more workers than the university programs can supply. Since the universities cannot fill the demand, many technical writers or technical communicators have no degree nor any commonly agreed upon background. Even work duties are not clearly delineated in the field. For some "technical writers" the major work duty is keyboarding, a clerical responsibility. Furthermore, technical communication is an employment field more extensive than positions in purely technical industries. Technical communicators can work in many situations, not just engineering-related occupations. Because of the influx of people into the field, and the expanding scope of employment situations, administrators of university programs must begin to clarify the meaning of a degree in technical communication.

General preparation of students

While no clear formulation of the exact contents of students' general preparation emerged, two areas were mentioned. First, industry representatives present seemed to agree that the university should produce well-rounded, educated people. Industry will train the educated person. One industry representative felt, for instance, that it would be better for a student to learn the concept of groupware and have some practice with one or several programs rather than for the universities to try to determine which single program to teach and to provide exclusive training in that one alone.

Second, educators present felt that a key ingredient in technical communication programs should be teaching students how to find out what things mean, how to learn. This broad skill will be more valuable than knowing specific skills.

A helpful note that emerged from this discussion: industry wants to suggest aptitudes that students need. However, no aptitudes were named in this session.

Technical requirements in programs

The general consensus of the group was that technical communicators must have technical skills that will eliminate passivity on the job, especially now that more and more writers are members of design teams. While all participants appeared to agree that the technical communicator must manipulate different symbol systems (e.g. tables and graphic and iconic elements) that differ from those used by technical professionals, still the technical communicator must be able to interact at a knowledgeable, credible level with technical professionals.

For most communicators and programs this need to interact translates into concerns about the number of math and science courses to require. One way to frame the issue is that technical communication students should have enough background to read Scientific American intelligently. Another way to frame it is that technical communicators must break their "mathophobia." Since math is a key element in the technical work place, students should have at least one year of calculus and at least one science course that uses calculus; statistics courses were also mentioned as

desirable, even possible substitutes for calculus. A major problem, however, is tokenism. One to three science courses really is not enough to prepare a person for professional level participation in the design discussions.

While no clear resolution emerged, participants expressed a desire that one of the communication professional groups, preferably CPTSC, take a stronger stand on the structure of the technical background for writers.

Service courses

The service course discussion was much shorter than the science background discussion, but a similar issue emerged. For engineering, or for that matter any professional students, one advanced course in writing is also tokenism. The communication demands now placed on professionals are so great that one course cannot provide all the necessary theory and practice. No model of the service course was elucidated, but a key element, one that all participants appeared to agree with, was that students in service courses need exposure to the theory and practice of the paradigm of interview-design-write.

Teaching in Industry

The discussion on teaching in industry focused on the kinds of problems that impede the effectiveness of training workshops. The three issues that arose were the role of the employees, the role of the managers and the structure of the training workshop.

Role of employees

The most common concern with employees is that they refuse to use what they learn. In effect they are willing to ignore the trainer because the trainer leaves and they stay. The source of this problem appears to be that employes feel that using the new methods and knowledge gained in workshop could hurt them later, especially if local culture, in the form of a particular manager or

management group, dictates one method and the trainer advocates another. This inability to effect a transfer of skills can only be dealt with by involving managers in planning and implementation.

Role of manager

Managers, who often sincerely want their employees to write better, can cause all kinds of problems. For instance, if a manager attends a workshop session, the employees will relate to him or her and say what they feel the manager wants to hear, thus effectively limiting a learning dialogue. Managers can also hinder a workshop's effectiveness by not allowing employees to implement the suggestions of the trainer. An especially difficult problem is the claim that no resources exist to revamp the communication process to accommodate the trainer's ideas. At times the managers could present a different kind of obstacle--they could actually be too far in front of their employees, having thought through problems and communication solutions without preparing the employes. As noted by the participants, this problem is not only an American one. One member mentioned that at a Japanese workshop a manager asked each person present to talk about communication problems and goals, but was clearly irritated if any person talked too long, thus effectively cutting off communication.

While no final solutions were phrased in this session, participants seemed to agree that the most effective way to defuse the manager problem was to involve the manager in the planning of the workshop. Managers must understand the goals of the workshop and must make a commitment to implementing the strategies covered in the workshop.

Structure of workshop

Although the participants did not develop a paradigm for workshop structure, they did offer several suggestions for trainers' approach to managers. Trainers should be aware that the topics of a workshop probably need to include more than just writing skills narrowly defined. In addition to writing skills, other topics include such items as conflict resolution, report design, and oral reporting. Trainers might also profitably use focus groups while planning a workshop. These

groups can reveal both the real concerns of the group and the real communication routes in the local culture. For instance many managers feel that there is an official path for the flow of communication and want the workshop to clarify that path, but focus groups could easily reveal that there is a much more powerful informal path that actually controls the flow of ideas in the organization.

Conclusion

This report is an overview, not a transcript of the session. The spirited conversation flowed from subject to subject, moving to new items and then returning to old ones. Of the topics discussed here the two that the participants elaborated most completely were the amount of technical background required of a technical communicator and the role of managers in communication training workshops.

Papers and Discussion on Program Assessment

Reassessing Program Assessment:
The Other Side of the Coin

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Let me begin by noting the anomaly in my function here; I am writing about assessment of degree programs in technical communication, but I am not part of one. Mine is a service program at the undergraduate level, with the existence of a minor or concentration on bachelors, masters, and Ph.D. levels. Yet I have long been concerned with the question of program assessment. In fact, my own school's writing program, with technical writing included, underwent an assessment by outside evaluators in 1984-85, leading to significant improvements in our situation. The resulting changes went into effect in the 1986-87 academic year. From the beginning, we planned to go through another outside evaluation after the fifth year of operating the program under the new conditions and the new curriculum. So we're now planning for another outside evaluation next year, and we're doing a self-study this year. Having experienced one assessment as program leader for technical writing, I am currently involved in planning for a second program assessment, during Fall 90 as Acting Director for the entire Writing Program and subsequently as Deputy Director. Technical communication is to be included in that as well. Perhaps that experience can have some relevance to others and add a useful dimension to the discussion.

Why Do We Need a Technical Communication Program Review Board? For several years now, this organization has been talking about establishing a Program Review Board, to the consternation of a number of individuals. Such reviews are viewed as potential threats by some, perhaps as judgmental determinations of conformity to some standardized curriculum. I would be the last person to want to approve of that approach to assessment. I feel strongly that we must honor the diversity of programs that is one of the prominent features of American higher education. The missions of different schools differ considerably, and the missions of their technical writing programs will differ accordingly. What is suitable for one institution may not be suitable for another. We must be sure that our guidelines for the Program Review Board clearly establish that the board must respect the differences of character and goals of the diverse educational institutions at which technical writing is taught. Even for schools with similar goals and student bodies, programs will and should be enacted differently according to the characteristics of the particular contexts. I would submit that respect for such diversity must form a basic

premise of our review board, as it is increasingly understood in discussions of assessments from national academic associations and from states such as New Jersey and Virginia, which require regular assessments of all programs in all colleges in the state.[1]

Recognizing the need for and value of diversity does not, however, mean that we should give up the notion that assessing programs might be of value. Assessment does not constitute an either/or dichotomy; there is ample ground between the rigid standardized curriculum and the curricular free-for-all.

I want in this paper to try to allay some of the fears surrounding the assessments that might be done by a Program Review Board, and even to suggest ways in which regular outside assessment can prove beneficial for a technical communication program. Let me emphasize that I am not saying that any kind of assessment, with any kind of purview, will benefit technical communication. In particular, a general review of an English Department, which examines technical communication as part of the department's activities, does not for me constitute an assessment of a technical writing program. Instead, such a review is primarily a review of a literary curriculum, with the few service activities such as technical writing often little valued or attended to by the assessment team. Occasionally a writing expert is part of the team. Very occasionally, a single technical communication person might form part of such a team. However, the primary concern of such a group is not the health and vitality of the technical communication program. Technical communication is not likely to be considered a priority when such a team makes recommendations for allocation of resources.

For a review board to benefit the technical communication program, it needs to be concerned about and expert about the conditions affecting the teaching of technical communication. Of course, experienced and qualified individuals have long been signing up independently as consultants to serve as evaluators at the request of particular schools and program directors. Yet many schools such as my own hesitate to rely on an individual recommended by their own faculty. They want an independent organization that can suggest suitable individuals for the particular institution. They want and need an organizational entity to deal with rather than just individuals who freelance. We ought to help our field and our members by making such a service available.

In my own experience, a review of all types of writing courses, conducted by representatives from the Association of Writing Program Administrators, did prove

beneficial for our technical writing service program. The WPA had no one available with particular expertise on technical writing degree or concentration programs at the time; their members mainly knew about standard types of technical communication service courses. They knew enough to tell the university that our program was innovative in its approach to these courses, and that we were able to substantiate that innovation with reference to relevant scholarly thinking. They recommended to the university administration that they devote resources to expand our program, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and for service courses as well as for concentrations.

Thus in some cases, more generalized evaluations can help a technical communication component or program. But in general, a service is needed to put universities in touch with an official group which can arrange for a suitable team to assess a particular technical communication degree or service program. If technical communication is a peripheral concern of the evaluating team coming in, the danger is that the program may be judged inappropriately and given insufficient consideration in the review.

What Might the Review Board Look For? If an assessment team should not be checking against a standardized type of curriculum, what guidelines might they be expected to follow? I would like to suggest a type of approach that informed the thinking of the graduate interest group at the 1988 annual meeting. As this group conducted its preliminary thinking about the issue of assessment, it preferred to identify a set of basic skills that it felt should be covered in any technical communication degree program, whether at the undergraduate, masters, or Ph.D. level. The group could not isolate a list of items specific to any one level. Instead, it felt that all levels should deal with all of the skills listed in different ways. A report of this discussion will appear in the 1988 Proceedings. The skills identified by the group included the ability to work collaboratively; the ability to analyze rhetorical situations and to suitably design, compose, revise, and assess texts on technical subjects; the ability to understand the social, cultural, and political contexts of the workplace and professional environment; the ability to understand major historical developments of the field; the ability to understand relevant ethical questions; and the ability to deal with research.

As the group envisioned the situation, these skills could and should be enacted differently at different levels and differently at the same level by different schools. The group welcomed a high degree of flexibility and originality on the part of individual programs. But the group did imply that a program assessment would examine whether the range and

variety of skills were indeed covered seriously, creatively, and in an integrated way, in a particular program under review.

This is one approach favored and suggested by one particular group within this organization. The group's thinking and planning was necessarily limited by the time available; there is much to be done yet in determining if such an approach is desirable and acceptable to the organization as a whole, and even then in guiding implementation by the review board.

In its discussion, the group acknowledged that the distribution of skills would, of course, change as research in the field changed our thinking about writing, about ways to teach writing in general and technical communication in particular, and about ways to explain technical communication and its relationship to other types of communication. For instance, 15 years ago, the ability to work collaboratively might not have been deemed essential for a technical writer. Responsible evaluations will have to remain sensitive to the implications of new developments in the literature as they impact on the basic skills needed by technical communicators in the workplace. The list of basic skills cannot remain rigid, but must be open to interpretation and modification as scholarship in our field and in related fields progresses.

In thinking about plans for conducting assessments, we have to realize that program assessments may be invited at two different stages: at the proposal stage, when only a plan exists for a degree program; and after a program has been operating for some time. In both stages, the assessment would have to examine the curriculum, as well as the size and nature of the faculty. But an assessment can and should look at much more than that. In both stages, the assessment ought to examine the availability of resources to support the program: equipment resources, travel resources, library resources, support staff and office resources, to list a few. For programs that depend on disenfranchised teachers such as teaching assistants or part-time faculty for undergraduate teaching, an assessment should question what resources are available for training, mentoring, supporting, and professionalizing the teaching staff. It seems to me that had a set of evaluators come in and examined and commented only on the Syracuse curriculum in 1984, they would have served us ill, for though much of the curriculum was worthy of praise, and some was not, even the strong parts of the curriculum were running on the backs of individuals who were not sufficiently well treated and who would not have been able to continue to give their best

without changes in their conditions. In other words, in my own experience, a review restricting its purview to curriculum matters would have left us in the dungeon.

A Case in Point: The Assessment at Syracuse University I can well sympathize with those who are troubled by the very idea of an evaluation board, who find somewhat threatening the very notion that evaluations of existing programs might become readily available and even common. I remember my own feelings when I was on leave in 1984, working on research, and I found out through a casual lunch date with a literature colleague that my technical writing program was to be evaluated, along with the freshman English program and the upper-division expository-writing program. I was in shock. I was untenured then, feeling very vulnerable. I had been part of the English Department committees that had pressed for changes in the freshman program and for changes in conditions for all writing faculty. I was also part of the English Dept. executive committee that pressed the Dean to set up an outside evaluation of the freshman program, which direly needed new direction.

In response, the Dean set up a college-wide committee to make some recommendations about the teaching of writing; we all saw that committee as focusing attention on the problem of freshman writing. There had never been any suggestion of unhappiness with my program, and now suddenly I and my technical writing program were to be evaluated. You can imagine how I magnified this in my paranoia. I feared this move as the start of the slippery slope, to get me pushed out of SU. Finally I went into my chairman's office to check if the rumor about such an evaluation were true, and to see if he could give me some background on it.

The chairman calmed me down right away. The college-wide committee had decided to include all the writing programs, including technical writing, as part of the evaluation for political reasons. They felt that to isolate the freshman program would have rankled on the freshman director, and he was already making life miserable for the other writing faculty, both of us junior in rank. The chairman also told me to think of the evaluation as an opportunity. He felt it could prove infinitely beneficial to me. For instance, he had been trying to get me course release time so I could have more time to train and supervise the cadre of 12 technical-writing teachers, six to eight of them new each year, and so that I could have time to develop a new and expanded graduate curriculum, but the Dean had consistently refused. I had to do all of this as overload. The evaluation provided an opportunity to use the outsiders for such purposes -- to help improve the conditions for

myself and for my teachers, who were all part-timers or TAs, all treated poorly by the university.

That discussion with the chairman put the whole evaluation in a new light for me, and I began to gather and prepare materials to help get the outside evaluators to see as problematic what I considered problematic. I also began to sketch out plans and ideas for future development. I prepared documents on the theoretical basis of the program I had established, and on what I wanted to do with it in future, all eminently useful for my upcoming tenure review. While I was doing this for technical writing, my three colleagues in writing, and the college-wide committee on writing, were preparing similar packages for their programs and from their perspectives. Part of this self-study involved collection and examination of papers from pre-freshman levels, immediate post-freshman levels, juniors, and seniors. In fact, the task force reading these papers found that a deterioriation in writing ability according to a number of crucial criteria occurred immediately after the freshman course. I also collected some information from former technical writing students, and from employers of students who had completed technical-writing service courses. In addition, I gathered information from employers of former students who had gone on to become technical writers. For all of the faculty involved, the self-study stage turned out to be a particularly informative experience.

The college committee, in its turn, contacted the Association of Writing Program Administrators, and after some discussion which established the nature of the university and the English Dept. and the implications for the types of evaluators who could prove influential in our environment, two evaluators were assigned to us. They read all the material we sent, asked for more, and came onto campus for two visits of several days each.

I don't want to give you the impression that the outside evaluators, on their visits to the campus, simply projected themselves as being there to help us out. They were not only objective, they were critical and often harsh. It wasn't exactly what I would call a pleasant experience. They had a routine, which I finally figured out in the middle of one of my meetings with them. One would be the aggressor, while the other was more ameliorative. We discovered that they switched roles in meetings with different individuals, taking turns as aggressor. The aggressor could be quite nasty, for instance putting me on the carpet for having continued as a faculty member in a system that exploited part-timers so badly and that staffed most of its technical writing courses with this underpriviledged caste. I had

been fighting for improvements within the system since my arrival at SU. They suggested it was unethical for me to have allowed this to go on -- I should perhaps have resigned or made some other dramatic gesture. They pushed every faculty member or administrator in similar fashion, often on different issues, in order to shake people up and gain control of the meetings. We had prepared so carefully for these visits that they wanted to get behind the prepared scripts and beneath the surface of the official rhetoric by way of unsettling us -- and they did.

They pulled these tricks only on the first visit. When they returned, some faculty met them with angry, intense speeches matching their tone of aggression in the first set of meetings, only to find them now sweet as lambs, reasonable and gentle in demeanor. In the end, their reports did exactly what they should have done, and we have finally benefitted tremendously. I'd emphasize that they were by no means functioning as paid mouthpieces for the writing faculty. They in fact suggested ways of resolving the dilemma of staffing our writing courses that differed considerably from the vision held by the writing faculty itself.

On the whole, they gave the junior faculty stature and credibility that would have taken years to build up on our own. They severely criticized the university for the overload conditions on writing faculty, and for the limited resources allocated for the teaching of expository and technical writing, and especially for the poor treatment of the disenfranchised teaching cadre. Of course, we as individual faculty, and even the English Dept. chairman and executive committee, had been pointing to the need to make all these changes for years. But the two outside evaluators had been suitably selected for our institution, and particularly for our humanities division. One was a professor from Berkeley and one from Georgetown. Both were highly placed in the literary establishment, particularly the MLA. Both had national visibility. In representing a national association of programs, they carried a degree of authority that the junior faculty in writing didn't have in our institution. For the university to ignore the major gist of their recommendations would affect the school's reputation within the MLA, within the WPA, and would clearly damage the university's standing with the humanities in general in important ways and on a national level. Significantly, the university did not ignore the recommendations.

I'd add as a footnote that one of the evaluators has frequently used our university, without citing names, as an example of a horror story that he and the WPA encountered when they came in to evaluate the curriculum, pedagogy, and conditions involved in the teaching of

writing. Though he mentions no names, many in the audience know exactly which school he's talking about. The university administrators knew this sort of thing was going to happen. Our former evaluator does point out in such presentations that many of the conditions were rectified as a result of the recommendations made by the evaluating team.

Actually, it wasn't as simple as he presents it, because the evaluators' recommendations went to a large ad-hoc college committee which made its own set of rather grander recommendations based on those of the evaluators. This committee, having spent two years studying innovative approaches to the teaching of writing at universities across the country, made recommendations that our school should put itself on the map. They suggested that the university take four writing courses that existed and redesign these; the redesigned courses should then be rearranged to form an integrated sequence of required writing courses, organized in a developmental sequence. (Technical communication is now the last course in the sequence.) The committee advocated that the undergraduate teaching be supported by a Ph.D. program in writing, with vastly improved conditions for the teachers and faculty engaged in this integrated effort. The fact that the outside evaluators had praised the junior faculty to the administration as creative thinkers in our fields gave some force to this committee's recommendation.

The writing faculty learned our lessons quickly as to the benefits that can accrue in this institution by bringing high-level outside experts to campus who could lobby for our concerns and our field. The next year, after the outside evaluation helped secure for us a fund for bringing writing experts to campus, we decided to use the fund for bringing few but very well placed individuals to campus for two-day stays, for the sake of visibility and impact, but also so that we could consult with these people and learn from them as we developed our plans. So we brought Robert Scholes, Ken Bruffee, and Toby Fulwiler; Richard Lanham was invited and Joe Williams was consulted. All of them communicated with Deans and Vice Presidents and Vice Chancellors, and they were all grilled about the quality of our plans and ideas and about some of the recommendations the outside evaluators had made. These people were not evaluators, but they functioned in much the same way, and they served as additional voices to provide ballast for our cause. Not every one of them agreed with every other one, or even with us, but as a group they proved immensely helpful. Since then, Richard Young from Carnegie Mellon, Janet Emig as president of NCTE, Lily Bridwell-Bowles from Minnesota, Richard Larson from the 3Cs, and a host of others have come in, and all have met with administrators from the Vice Chancellor on down. We firmly believe in the value of allowing outside experts the

opportunity to assess what we are doing, on a regular basis. We are also planning for a follow-up formal outside evaluation to take place next year.

You might ask what we got out of all of this that we couldn't have gotten otherwise. Substantial resources, for one thing. This involves released time for administrators; travel support for part-time faculty and teaching assistants; support for speakers; new space and renovated offices to replace the basement dungeon cells that teachers formerly lived in; new conference rooms and meeting rooms and lounges; a computer lab and computer equipment for all faculty, as well as computer rooms for the part-time teachers and TAs.

The director hired for the new integrated program was attracted by the resources the university was committing in response to the evaluators' report. She was able to negotiate an additional set of improvements. Our assistant professors now teach a 2/1 load; they're expected to lead study groups, or curriculum development groups, or task forces for 135 teachers to compensate for the extra course release they get, since the normal load in English is 2/2. Our administrators teach a 1/1 load, and even that is flexible. We have a university commitment to build a writing faculty of 10; we started with two and now have reached seven. We also have a commitment for a Ph.D. program, under our own curricular rubric, not as part of an English Ph.D. or a Humanities Ph.D. or anything else. We have administrative and curricular independence for writing, which has proven invaluable. We now choose who teaches writing courses as part-time faculty. That means that writing courses are no longer the dumping ground for English or Philosophy or Humanities graduate students in good standing who need support, but who might be middling or awful teachers. We have control now.

All of these are big steps, and they wouldn't have happened without the outside evaluation. I want to suggest then that all of us think of the possibility of an outside assessment of technical communication as an opportunity, and not just as a necessary or avoidable evil. I hardly know of any outside evaluation of a writing program that has not recommended that substantive additional resources be allocated to the program under review. But apart from the material gains, the outside evaluation provided for us an intense, rich, and extremely valuable learning experience. Assessment may be able to make an important contribution if approached in a spirit of inquiry.

What About the Dangers? In response to some of the concerns about the dangers of an outside evaluation, I want also to address the sense in which an outside evaluation is not

entirely an outside evaluation. For although people from outside the university come in to do the assessment, there's still plenty of local control from within. Some of that control lies in the opportunity to describe the type of institution and the type of values within the program and without, and thus to influence the type of evaluator who could function credibly and helpfully in this situation. There is also an opportunity to provide a lens to focus attention on the program and university in the ways you deem it should be viewed and analyzed. That is, you prepare the documents that provide background material and that provide the grounding for an assessment. Each program has the chance to describe its own mission and relation to the university and its public, and to present its curricular and pedagogical decisions in that light.

Even in assessments conducted for accreditation purposes, there is still a lot of freedom as to the types of information that a program or even a university supplies for the assessors as a basis for evaluation. In its 1989 statement on criteria for accreditation, the Southern Association for Colleges indicates that the individual institution should be regularly evaluating the extent to which its educational goals are being achieved, and that these evaluations will be looked at in an accreditation review. The procedures for doing so may include a variety of options. A program might offer information about performance on exit tests, or information from peer faculty in related programs. It might offer information from structured interviews with current students and graduates. It may offer narrative commentary from students. It may offer samples of graded portfolios. It may offer surveys of graduates and of employers, or information about placement of graduates in professional positions. It may offer surveys of employers of former students. It may offer indications of changes in student thinking as a result of changes in a program, and so on. It may offer any but not necessarily all of these options in designs it finds appropriate. Each program has the chance to choose particular evaluation data and procedures as distinctly suitable for its nature.

Of course, if there are gross differences between the program's own objectives and practices and national standards and practices for that type of school, the reviewers might certainly point attention to this. In an accreditation review, the school will have to make changes that might be suggested to conform with accreditation requirements. But CPTSC is not proposing accreditation reviews.

I do not suggest that there is no danger to assessment. One could hypothesize a variety of scenarios in which an outside assessment might prove counterproductive. For instance, a

poor choice of evaluators might result in an assessment that cannot carry credibility in a particular school. The lack of respect for the evaluators might extend to the field, with severely negative consequences. Alternately, individual evaluators might promote their own narrow notions of what a graduate or undergraduate program should be, with consequences for the success of the plans submitted by the technical communication faculty at the school. That is, any situation of power brings with it the threat of problematic applications of power. To help minimize such problems, we will have to be extremely careful in training and choosing evaluators, and in designing the guidelines for the process.

Conclusion Despite the possible dangers, assessment of technical writing programs under the rubric of a technical communication review board can have the potential to provide material benefit in a field that has historically been underfunded and undervalued. Such an assessment process can offer an opportunity for expansion or enhancement. In addition, such an assessment process has the potential for intellectual benefits in our field, for assessment has the potential for discovery.

I would suggest that the field of technical communication is relatively new, and its curriculum and pedagogy are yet at early stages of development. In our field, program assessment can become an avenue for inquiry, rather than a tool for rubberstamping approval or disapproval. There is much that we can learn from inquiry-directed assessments. Our review board can ask for self-study materials which might prove extremely productive in learning about the effects of a curriculum and program design on the students. If we develop our plans for the board more in line with such notions of the learning potential from assessment, we can contribute to furthering the understanding of assessment, of teaching, of learning, of technical communication in the workplace, and of a whole host of related areas. Establishment of the review board can, then, begin to contribute to the field in substantive and exciting ways.

[1] For example, see the 1989 Montclair State College Presidential Task Force Statement on Assessment. Another suitable example is the March/April 1989 Green Sheet, published by the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges.

Measuring Institutional Culture: An Anthropological Approach to Assessment

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Scene: A Hardware store

Clerk:	May I help you?
Customer:	I'd like to buy a tool.
Clerk:	Yes, sir. What kind?
Customer:	Something to measure with.
Clerk:	Yes. What do you want to measure?
Customer:	I'm not sure.
Clerk:	Well, what kind of tool do you have in mind?
Customer:	Oh, the kind of thing my friends use. A micrometer; perhaps a yardstick. One fellow I know uses a surveyor's level. One of those maybe.
Clerk:	It would really help if you could tell me what you intend to measure.
Customer:	I don't know. I can't define it.
Clerk:	Well, why do you want to measure it?
Customer:	Can't say, but other people have been measuring it for years.

Cohen, A., and F. Brawer, *Measuring Faculty Performance* . Washington, D.C.: The ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior College Information, 1969, 49.

Like the customer in the hardware store, we academics have difficulty saying exactly what it is we want to measure with our assessment tools. Although we have no guarantee our measurement tools are valid or reliable, academic assessment is generally and broadly based on teaching, frequently measured by student evaluations, publications, and service activities. As a result, our instruments tend us toward the conservative: we value and reward the same sorts of professional activities that we have

always rewarded. Further, such instruments discourage academic programs from critical self-study unless those standards are inextricably tied to the goals of a department or program and to the individual interests and abilites of its faculty. Arriving at those program goals and establishing faculty talents and interests is the subject of this paper.

Organizations consist generally of many subcultures rather than of one overarching mega-culture, and the differences among those subcultures can be profound, as Glaser, Zamanou, and Hacker point out in "Measuring and Interpreting Organizational Culture." In particular, top management in the organization Glaser and her colleagues surveyed perceived a significantly more positive climate, stronger communication, significantly more effective supervision and involvement in the organization than did line supervisors, clerical staff or line workers. Those latter groups felt decidedly less certain than did top management that employees' ideas and opinions were valued or considered, that departments and divisions interacted, that meetings involved interaction and decision-making, that employees knew what they should be doing or where the organization was headed, or that supervisors provided feedback and recognition for good work. In short, employees at different levels were working in vastly different organizational cultures.

I think we can safely assume a similar description applies to academic programs and departments. They too are subsystems within a larger system and are made up of subsystems. At different levels, people's perceptions differ with regard to the goals, rewards, values, heroes, rituals, ceremonies and communication networks of their organization. Therefore, describing those cultural features would be a first step to defining the departmental or program "thrust" within the larger culture of the institution.

As Richard I. Miller explains in *Evaluating Faculty Performance*, "an individually developed evaluative grid--in line with the objectives of the institution and the department--provides optimum flexibility and individualization. The grid should consider three dimensions: the nature of the institution, the nature of the department, and individual interests and abilities"(12-13). Miller allows us to

appreciate that developing tools that evaluate faculty, that review courses, or that assess programs and departments must begin with decisions about the goals most important to our particular academic culture.

Needless to say, other sorts of assessment can provide valuable feedback, meaningful evaluation, and a base line for further judgments. For example, outcomes research on a program's alumni or an outside review by people in the field, no doubt, would provide evaluation of a program from perspectives different from the one I am proposing here. Still, both outcomes research and outside reviews hold some danger of fostering self-congratulation and self-promotion of any program because both measurement tools suffer from limited and subjective points of view.

Instead, program assessment could begin with a serious self-study, not a qualitative self-study of its merit and that of its faculty, but a description of the cultures that make up the program. Such self-study can be undertaken by asking for members' descriptions of what they see to be the goals, rewards, values, heroes, rituals, ceremonies, and communication networks within the organization. Those features might be described for the institution, the program or department, and for individuals, forming the grid that teaching, publication and service can be tied to. Such a cultural analysis might produce a useful background for measuring professional growth, merit, and a program's focus.

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Evaluating Service Programs in Scientific and Technical Communication: How Can Qualitative Research Help Us?

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In programs of service courses, courses designed to train nonmajors and professionals to write, we are prone to ignore our failures. Under the pressure of external demands, directors and teachers within the program get defensive and feel the need to proclaim success before they have taken a hard look at what they are doing. After all, the courses are held in low esteem by research-oriented faculty and administrators, despite lip-service commitments to undergraduate education and writing across the curriculum. Is it any wonder that we want to be happy with what we've what hard to develop? The more systematic and comprehensive our approach to the program, the more we get attached to it. We feel we ought to have finished our work on the program when our courses have a common theoretical base, when the syllabi neatly reflect this base, when the most teachable textbooks within our theoretical framework are chosen, when our student evaluations are high on the average, and when we have trained a dependable core of part-time instructors to cover the bulk of the sections. Why mess with this "success"?

Here's why: none of the advantages I've listed have much to do with effective teaching. They are surely advantageous for the teacher and the program administrator, but they do not necessarily benefit either the students or the other clientele of service courses—the faculty in other departments who entrust us with their majors (whether naively or cynically). A good, clear syllabus developed from a sound theory should make learning about writing easier for the student, but can it really contribute very much to improving the student's writing?

Again, the theory, the syllabus, the textbook, the student evaluations, the core of lecturers are issues of teachability, an administrative matter more than a substantial contribution to the rhetorical education of the writer. If the process movement in composition pedagogy has taught us anything, it is that we need to know something about the complex set of interactions among course content, teachers, and students—that we need to analyze the program and the individual courses as communicative and rhetorical encounters—before we can say anything about their value as learning experiences. The best way to discover the information is through systematic qualitative research, the purpose of which is to document what happens in our courses and to open doors that reveal the finely grained practices of our programs. A commitment to close descriptive work in the evaluation process will permit others to know what we really do and, on that basis, to make judgments about our work.

The first thing we need to do ourselves is deliberately to abandon questions of success and failure. Our evaluations shou'd be "formative" rather than "summative." Summative evaluations display and discuss the results of our work, usually for an audience external to the program. Formative evaluations, on the other hand, are internally-motivated; they aim to "identify strengths and weaknesses while the program is being conducted so that ongoing improvements can be made" (Lauer and Asher 221). While the best formative evaluations are less interested in judging between success or failure and more interested in actually contributing to the process of value formation, summative evaluations all but inevitably lead to questionable claims of success. Arguments for success in accomplishing goals—the kind of upbeat presentation the higher-ups want to hear—are all too easily prepared, even when they must be supported with quantitative data. Teaching evaluations, enrollment versus salary figures, test results, and other kinds of "found data" are there for the taking (White 212). In final analysis, though, these numbers yield little knowledge about what matters to us.

Instead of worrying about what our deans need to hear, for a moment, let's think about what *we* need. As writing program administrators, we need to document and understand discrepancies between our objectives and our results. As researchers in the field, we could benefit from the publication of the results of hard-headed formative evaluations. Information on service teaching seems to have drained out of our journals. Just when the technical writing movement was getting up some real steam in this country, our attention seems to have

shifted from the training of engineers and scientists to the preparation of professional communicators—our majors. Just like our departments and the departments that send us their majors, we seem to have lost interest in service courses. They are everyone's orphan. The first step in evaluation of our service programs, then, is to get the desire to do some real work on these courses, work that might lead us to do more work yet. We must take up our service burden with renewed vigor. We must value the courses enough to evaluate them.

The second step is to get a method. A good choice in method could produce results useful to us in ways that reach beyond the political economy of departments and colleges; they can be more than exercises in self-justification. The procedure we choose should help us make better curricula and should also create a testing ground in our classrooms so that we can learn something about our theories of writing.

One thing is clear: We probably won't get what we need from the usual quantitative tests. The recent literature on writing program evaluation is all but unanimous in this judgment (Witte and Faigley; White; Fulwiler). Quantitative testing yields information that can represent only the most limited aspects of our programs since, by definition, good numbers emerge from the most carefully controlled experimental conditions. To develop reliable quantitative data about programs that emphasize service courses is next to impossible; the kinds of things we want to do well are too complex and thus too hard to measure.

In the program I direct at Texas A&M, for example, we teach five service courses—research writing at the freshman level, writing about literature at the sophomore level, technical writing at the junior level, and both business and technical writing at the graduate level. To judge the value of the courses as an overall program means to establish common objectives. That's not too hard, since the teachers in our program tend to base their approach on rhetoric. The aim in all of our service courses is to help students discover the ways and means of creating texts that effectively accommodate the needs of an author to those of an audience. Rhetorical effectiveness will always elude the grasp of objective measure, since it is situationally constructed and not subject to the rules that govern generalizability in statistics. To administer a pre-test and a post-test in a technical writing course and to show that the frequency of errors declined, or even that scores on holistically-graded reports improved, tells us only that the students somehow learned to adjust their writing to the situation of the writing class. Holistic grading is reader-sensitive; it is based on criteria for excellence agreed upon by a

team of judges. Above all, the pre-test/post-test model claims to have established *the* situation at the beginning of the class and *the* situation at the end of the class and makes no allowances for situational variability. The teacher, or the trained team of holistic graders, remains the invariant judge. Moreover, this inflexible presence attempts to confer a similar inflexibility upon the text and the author by setting criteria for success and failure. The author has no chance to adjust, to revise, to defend a particular choice. Every dialogic aspect of the experience is denied. What kind of measure is this of a course that teaches that, in every rhetorical situation, the author, text, and audience are reconfigured and co-mingled in ways that lead to infinite textual variation?

Let us not, then, admit that the things we care about most cannot be measured, then set out to measure what we can. Let us turn instead to the alternative of qualitative evaluation. Qualitative analysis provides a much stronger means of foregrounding problems with our programs and exploring new means of meeting our objectives. The results of these investigations, though not generalizable in the strictest sense, will no doubt be useful not only to people in the program but also to people responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating similar programs. In moving beyond positivistic measures of performance, this approach urges us to suspend the self-satisfaction that blinds us to flaws in our program, that leads us to what Karl Popper has called "ethical and juridical positivism, the doctrine that what is, is good, since there can be no standards but existing standards" (2.41). As Stephen North has suggested, the phenomenological power of ethnographic study—the most systematic and demanding scheme for qualitative investigation—allows investigators "to unseat their own taken-for-granted notions" about what goes on in writing programs, about the meaning of what goes on, about alternatives for the future, and about what students and colleagues think about the programs. Ethnography opens the door to change and its attendant anxiety, a threat that I think we must face if evaluation is to be meaningful and enriching.

Allow me to share with you a design for a qualitative study I am currently undertaking in the rhetoric-based service program at Texas A&M. My goals are to determine the soundness of the rhetorical approach and to see how a method of instruction can be stretched before it breaks. I am speaking of the scenario method of rhetorical analysis and production, which my colleague Elizabeth Tebeaux appears to have perfected in courses in business and technical writing. My hypothesis is that the scenario method, which is widely used in training

technical communication students, might also be useful in other service courses, where students all too often seem to lack the contextual information they need to write papers that are rhetorically effective. What I need to know is this: Is the scenario method really a valuable means of teaching rhetoric or is it, like the old modes approach, just a neat way to organize a course? If the method is useful, what adjustments are needed to make it work in courses with different contents and different student populations? As I experiment with course development, I want to document what happens as closely as I can, so that, when all is done, I am not left merely with the impression that I have worked very hard and with the conclusion that my hard work must be rewarded with pronouncements of success. Instead, I can give my report to my colleagues and to professors in other departments, who send us their students. I can invite an interpretive dialogue and mutual decision-making about how to make the course better. These others can comment on the appropriateness of the scenarios I use and the assignments I create out of them. They can become witnesses to the actions and interactions of the class. Too many of them are unsure about what we do in our writing classes; now they can see, and they can also see that we value the classes enough to make systematic studies of them.

Here's the plan. In several service courses, another teacher-researcher and I will administer the following rough procedure:

1. Early in the class, we will present the students with a sample of a rhetorical situation, a scenario. The following example, from Tebeaux's *Design of Business Communications*, would work well in any of the technical writing courses:

   The vice president of planning for Vesco, Inc., authorizes you to determine the best site for building a new warehouse. According to the real estate agency with which the vice president is working, there are three currently available sites that are the size the company needs. Your job is to analyze each in terms of cost, accessibility by customers, location in relation to supply units, terrain, and future development potential. Once you complete the analysis, you are to write a feasibility study recommending the best site of the three and justifying your decision. Harold McKracken, the vice president for planning will be the primary reader, but you feel certain that people from other areas of the company will eventually receive copies if McKracken likes your report. (Tebeaux 217-18)

2. The students will also be presented with a set of questions to guide them in writing an informal analysis of the scenario as their first writing assignment. The questions, derived from pragmatic analysis, lie at the heart of the rhetoric-based goal of our program:
    i. What information will the author possess that the audience does not?
    ii. How much and what parts of this information will readers need in order to perform the actions they want to perform?
    iii. Ideally, what forms of writing (types of words, sentences, graphics, page design, etc.) will convey the information in a way that ensures that the purposes of the author and audience converge in an effective action?
    iv. What kinds of constraints (time, money, manners, ethics, policy, etc.) might the writing situation impose upon this ideal text?
3. The analyses will be collected from all classes and compared by the teacher-researchers, who will develop a set of discussion questions. Two students from each class will have been selected as the subjects of detailed case studies. They will be interviewed about their analyses or about other writing experiences in and out of the class. The same procedure will be followed after each assignment. Interviewing some of the students allows us to track more closely, and in greater depth, the interaction of the students with the subject matter of the course. Many times students can say things in an interview that they can't write or that they can't assert in class discussions. These interviews should give an additional texture to the narrative that emerges from the study.
4. Selected discussions of scenarios and writing assignments by the whole class will be taped and analyzed by both researchers, who will also keep notes on each class. The interviews with the selected subjects and the tapes of the class will add depth and range to the study, while the notes of the teacher-researchers will provide an overall impression and will guide an on-going process of interpretation.
5. Either through an open-formatted survey or through personal interviews, professors from both the English department and other departments served by the courses will be enlisted to comment on the syllabus and writing assignments for each course. The comments will be plowed into the growing body of data.

6. All the notes and transcripts collected by the end of the course will be coded with special attention to the appearance of problems. The analysis of the coded materials will amount to a classification and full description of the problems, followed by or including an account of the treatment of such problems in the theoretical and pedagogical literature.
7. A report based on the analysis will be presented to the department's Writing Committee, the members of which will be asked to recommend any adjustments necessary in the program to meet needs that they perceive to be revealed by the report.

Typical of qualitative research, the project will probably not proceed in such a neat linear fashion. The syllabus moves from analysis and writing based on provided scenarios to analysis and writing based on discovered scenarios to analysis and writing based on student-generated scenarios. Just in formulating the investigation, though, I have made some adjustments in my syllabus. Even in writing this paper, I have made adjustments in the pragmatic heuristic that the students use to analyze scenarios and in the research design. So the process of researcher-teacher-content interaction has already begun. It will continue throughout the project, and ideally the report will document my wanderings and wonderings.

The resulting narrative will apply to no one but me and my fellow teacher-researcher. The experience it documents is not generalizable in the technical sense. So if every class, every teacher, every rhetorical situation is different, how is this an evaluation of a program? It is not; it is only a story of teacher-researchers working in service courses. The evaluation doesn't really happen until step 7, when the committee listens to the account and renders an interpretive judgment. Like avant garde fiction, my narrative should challenge the committee to look to their own experience and to question themselves and their work. It should shake them loose from their inertia and provide a m[illegible] of value-determining action.

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SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION (WITH COMMENTARY): PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

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General discussion at the 17th Annual Conference of the Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication was lively and thought-provoking. The papers on program assessment presented by Carol Lipson and Jimmie Killingsworth were followed by an interesting exchange (although brief, due to time constraints) which I will summarize here. I will follow this summary with some observations of my own, based on retrospective reflection about the issues raised during this segment of the 1990 CPTSC conference.

Issues Raised in the Papers

Carol Lipson's paper on "Assessing Programs for Educating Professional Communicators" recounted her personal experiences in undergoing a writing program evaluation at Syracuse University. Although writing program reviews can often be perceived as threatening events, Carol's account highlighted the importance of considering institutional differences in any evaluation and the benefits that can be gained in terms of stature and credibility for

technical and scientific communication programs by having "authorities" from outside the institution evaluate the effectiveness of a particular program. In examining the resources available for a particular program, an outside assessment can often justify the attainment of additional resources. Carol also emphasized the importance of conducting program assessments at both the planning stage and after the program has been in existence for some time, and the necessity of including multiple indicators for the evaluation. Assessments are not necessarily punitive, but can be beneficial for our programs.

Jimmie Killingsworth's paper on "Assessing Programs for Educating Professionals Who Communicate" examined the issues surrounding the offering of service courses through our programs in technical and scientific communication. Jimmie observed that we need systematic, qualitative research for our processes in evaluating such programs, and that we need formative rather than summative evaluations. What we most require, according to Jimmie, is a good method to evaluate the difference between the goals of our programs and the results we achieve. Objective measurements can assist in more accurately foregrounding problems with programs, as well as providing a tangible basis for implementing plans for their improvement.

Both papers raised questions relating to the importance of program assessment. These issues focused around the broad concerns of why we should assess programs and how we ought to go about accomplishing meaningful assessments. The conference attendees were eager to respond to these important questions, especially in terms of specific reactions and techniques to

accomplish assessment. A lively discussion followed the two papers, although it was cut somewhat short due to time constraints.

Summary of Discussion

The discussion following these papers was facilitated by Laurie Hayes of the University of Minnesota. The attendees' remarks related to the importance and nature of program evaluations, as well as to the possible methodologies involved in such an evaluation process.

All seemed to agree that well-informed, well-known technical and scientific communication "experts" from outside the university program under evaluation could help a great deal in enhancing a program's image of professionalism and the importance of its pedagogical and scholarly efforts. Such a positive influence would enhance the department as a whole as well. Others commented that it was not so much the results of an evaluation process that are important, but rather what one can learn from such a process. Still others warned that evaluations could contain charged, political issues, depending on the agendas pursued by the evaluators. Because of this possibility, we must work at gaining our own understanding of who we are and what we are attempting to accomplish in our programs. A program assessment document can serve as an action-forcing mechanism and do away with the "window dressing." In short, it can get at the substance rather than the style of a particular program.

A program evaluation can also provide opportunities for certain kinds of reflections -- such as, what does it mean to evaluate student work? There was considerable discussion about methods for evaluating student writing as a way of ascertaining what a particular department is doing and the success of its program. The issue is that of measuring whether those who practice writing on the job actually do what we purport to teach them in our programs. One of the suggestions that emerged from this part of the discussion was that appropriate techniques should be developed for the performance evaluation of writers, so that the effects of our programs could be accurately measured. Some of those present commented that there was nothing of value available for evaluating technical communicators currently in the marketplace.

Two important concepts resulted from the remainder of the discussion. First, it was generally agreed that attempts to measure the quality of a particular program should be performative and not subjectively evaluative. Second, it was generally agreed that the measure of the quality of a program should be whether it meets the specifications of its pre-established goals.

Finally, there was some general discussion about the advisability of having an accreditation mechanism for programs in technical and scientific communication. There was not a group consensus on this issue. Those in favor of accreditation felt that it was essential for establishing the professionalism and credibility of our field, while those against accreditation maintained that it was impossible for accurate accreditation to occur because of the wide diversity in programs. Titles and types of degrees are not indicative of program content.

Retrospective Commentary

The concerns expressed in this discussion on program assessment left many of us with the motivation to return to our own institutions and examine carefully our programs' existing educational goals. When I did this, I began to think more about the differences between assessment and accreditation, and I was reminded of some of the educational distinctions made by Robert F. Mager in his book Measuring Instructional Results (Belmont, California: Lake Publishing Co., 1984). Mager's salty advice might be helpful for CPTSC.

Mager (page 8) makes a distinction between the notions of "measurement" and "evaluation." According to him, the process of measurement determines the extent of some characteristic associated with an object or person (and I would add, program). On the other hand, the act of evaluation compares a measurement with a standard and passes judgment on the comparison. It seems to me that the crux of the CPTSC discussion about assessment and accreditation revolved around differences between these two concepts. Program aassessment involves measuring the accomplishments of a program against its own stated objectives, while program accreditation involves comparing a program's accomplishments with some external standard and passing judgment on the results of the comparison. The former requires self-established goals, while the latter requires externally established ones.

Whatever one's position on these two methods, the notion of goal-setting is the key for implementing both of them. If anything, the discussion provided many opportunities for all of us to re-evaluate our individual program goals.

CPTSC's Future Challenge

I believe that the issue of program assessment will remain a major one for CPTSC during the next few years. As our organization continues to grapple with this important issue, we must clearly differentiate between measurement and evaluation. We will need to keep in mind that (in spite of differences in opinion) we are all in search of the larger goal of QUALITY. We all want to have quality programs which produce quality graduates, so that the field of technical and scientific communication will continue to grow and improve during the years ahead. But how should we go about accomplishing this?

Robert Pirsig's Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance (New York: Bantam Books, 1974), remains a helpful work to consult for considerations of the concept of quality. Pirsig's expanded notion of what he calls "the sun of quality" is that it does not revolve around the subjects and objects of our existence and passively illuminate them. As he explains, "It [quality] is not subordinate to them in any way. It has *created* them. They are subordinate to *it*!" (page 215). Likewise, our 1990 discussion was subordinate to quality.

Although we may pursue different paths toward the attainment of quality in our technical and scientific communication programs, it is these divergent views and the (sometimes heated) discussions which result from them that will ultimately strengthen CPTSC. And it is from a consideration of our common goals rather than our differing opinions that we will resolve the major issues relating to program assessment.

17th Annual Business Meeting

Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication

Annual Business Meeting- October 13, 1990

Agenda

President's Address
Marilyn Schauer Samuels

Old Business

Minutes of 1989 Annual Meeting
Sandy Pfeiffer, Secretary
Treasurer's Report
Carol S. Lipson
Report of the Program Review Board Committee
Billie Wahlstrom, Chair
Report on New Election Procedures and Membership
Gloria Jaffe, Vice President
Report on Proceedings, 1989
Laurie Hayes, Member-at-Large
Results of 1990 Election
Gloria Jaffe,
Chair/Nominating Committee

New Business

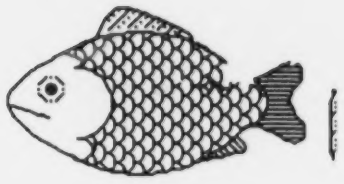
Location, format, and theme of 1991 annual meeting

Location of 1992 Annual Meeting

Publications

Creating and Updating an On-line Directory of Programs

Other



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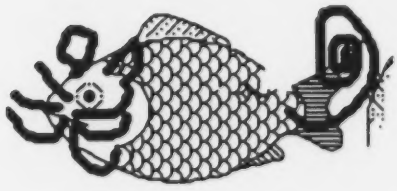
SEAS AND
HARBORS

C A T F I S H



President's Address

Once upon a time, but not too long ago, in the village of Sao Paulo lived a fisherman called Tomas. There were few if any other fishermen in Sao Paulo, and each day Tomas would trudge out to sea in his small rowboat alone or with one or two assistants. Each day Tomas would face new problems as if no one had ever faced them before-- whether to use nets or hooks; how to find the fish; how to keep them fresh; and how to market them.

Every once and a while Tomas and his crew would notice other boats in the water and see other people with poles and nets. Tomas looked at the horizon and thought. What if a few fisherman in small boats out in the huge waters could get together and share their experience. It would be refreshing to talk with others who seem to be doing what I am doing and find out how we are different and how we are the same. It would be good to swap stories.

So Tomas sent out messages to the other boats and to the few villages he knew of where there were thriving fishermen and asked each to send a representative to the first of what he hoped would be many annual meetings.

Only a few of the most prominent fishermen came to the first meeting, and mostly they exchanged fish stories, swapped tips and tall tales. But in a few years the annual meeting had become a ritual and more representatives participated, although they were still only those people with a solid reputation for catching and marketing their fish.

It was soon clear that the organization needed an official name, an official policy, and a set of operating procedures.

The name they chose was the Council for the Advancement of Technological Fishing Innovations in Seas and Harbors or CATFISH; and their philosophy was that the experts should share their expertise and their resources with one another.

But while the ink was still drying on their bylaws, they began to notice that the waters around them were shifting. Changes in medical knowledge and technological advances in shipbuilding were creating a greater demand for fish as a regular part of the healthy diet and making the choices of boats and equipment more complex. As the charter members advanced to bigger, better equipped boats, they noticed more and more trawlers in the water, many ressembling the kinds of small, self-constructed vessels in which they had begun. They began to read or see pictures of fishermen whom they had never heard of posing with their latest catch.

At that point, CATFISH had an important decision to make. Will we continue to be a closed organization for only the biggest and the best, or will we expand our purposes to include as members those not as famous as us, those just beginning, and even those for whom a good-sized trout is yet but a dream. They took sides, and when it was decided to diversify the membership, some of the charter members pulled out of the wharf never to return.

But CATFISH went on recruiting more members and putting out a newsletter to keep each other informed of new developments in the field. It soon became clear, that reaching out more to each other was not enough. In order to understand their own tasks and goals they needed to interact with other practitioners, and other theorists: frozen food companies, environmental protectionists, marine biologists, and consumers. They needed to develop effective ways of exchanging information with groups outside their own while still maintaining their own integrity as fishermen and fisherwomen.

Yes, women! One day Tomas's friend, Burnwhito of Troy, walked into a local cafe to have his morning coffee. There before him in two long rows were twenty-four fisherwomen. No not fishwives, but women who like Tomas and Burnwhito fished and were members and some even officers of CATFISH. His friend, Garcon had warned him: "Let them in," he had said, "and before you know it, the way we fish will never be the same!"

Garcon ,of course, was right. After a long day of listening to one personal story after the other at an annual meeting in New Mexico, one of the fisherwomen said, "I am tired of hearing your fish stories. Each of us knows well how the other fishes. We don't need an annual meeting for that." "Right," chimed in another. "Instead of speaking at each other, let's have a meeting with problem-solving workshops; let's put our heads together to create new ways to fish that will help us all."

So at the next meeting, there were no speeches, no fish stories, just a series of opportunities for collaborative learning. And then the members realized that they no longer needed the kind of publication they had before, a Proceedings full of sea shanties, but that they needed some other kind of publication that would reflect the group process and advance it. And they also needed a new set of procedures, a better way to involve more members in the group process of running CATFISH and of promoting the fishing industry in general.

In seventeen years the group had made two major changes in its philosophies, methods, and rules. CATFISH had evolved, but it was still CATFISH. And just as they were about to congratulate themselves on changing with the times while still preserving their essence, they saw a terrible storm rise up and ripple the waters. And as the lightning flashed, they saw before them the fishing boat of the future: there were no men on it, only computer terminals and a storage place for fish. From a huge tower in the middle of the ocean, a computer programmed to simulate nautical biorhythms sent signals to the fish that attracted them to the ship's hold. When the storage hold was filled, the automated controls guided the ship back to the dock. As the fisherman watched spellbound, the name on the ship's bow changed from H.M.S. Future to H.M. S. Now.

They all knew what it meant. "The world, the sea, and the fish," said a wise old member, "continue to change, and we must change

with them. But we must change faster now because we have created a world in which metamorphosis is a daily event."

The lesson of the fishermen is the message I would like to leave with you about navigating the future of CPTSC and of Technical Communication Programs. Like CATFISH our organization is strong because it has been able to change shape in response to the needs of its membership without discarding its ballast and anchor. Our individual programs are also strong because the best of them have continued to reconceptualize what they do in response to new technologies and new job markets without sacrificing their fundamental standards.

Both as members of CPTSC and as program directors we have managed to steer between the Scylla and the Charybdis of too much innovation and too little. But centering between the devil and the deep blue sea will be harder now, because the natural flow of the waters in which we sail is speeding up.

To keep afloat we must use the communication technologies we teach to others to provide up-to-date online directories, bulletin boards and information exchanges. In order to become state-of-the art, CPTSC will have to reach out in ways we have not reached out before by seeking financial support from educational institutions or public and private foundations. Your executive committee will need to find money for essential member services without coming under the thumb of other agencies.

Your executive committee will also have to come to a decison with the aid of the membership on whether or not CPTSC wants to make reviewing of programs one of its missions. Programs are already evaluated by individuals and groups, and if CPTSC does not become the focal point for these reviews, some other group will. Either way, the organization is once again at a turning point, and I strongly urge the new executive committee to begin a reassessment of realistic goals for the next few years. If CPTSC chooses not to be a center of information, advising, and review, then what does it wish to be, to whom, and how?

CPTSC is a sturdy ship with a crew of enthusiastic fishermen and fisherwomen. As long as its directors with the support of its membership maintain a healthy balance of stability and change, it will stay afloat wherever and however it chooses to sail. I have faith in CPTSC, and as your outgoing president, I leave you with just one caution as expressed in an old Chinese proverb:

To talk much and get nowhere is the same as climbing a tree to catch a fish....

Marilyn Schauer Samuels

Minutes

CPTSC
17th Annual Business Meeting
October 13, 1990
San Diego, California

Marilyn Samuels, CPTSC President, called the meeting to order. Reading of the minutes of the previous year's meeting was waived.

Treasurer's Report: Carol Lipson summarized the CPTSC financial report, copies of which were distributed at the meeting. Carol noted that the $2486.24 balance does not reflect expenses for the 1988 and 1989 *Proceedings* and for the 1990 meeting.

Program Review Board Committee: Billie Wahlstrom presented the findings of the PRB Committee. The following four motions were passed during the discussion: (1) the new Executive Committee will name a Program Development Advisory Board; (2) the PDAB will ask the membership to respond to a questionnaire (which will be an edited version of the one included in the PRB draft distributed at the meeting); (3) designated CPTSC representatives will work with the WPA, SCA, STC, and other organizations to pursue joint program-review goals, including providing a list of people to help with reviews; and (4) the PDAB will report to the Executive Committee, after which the Executive Committee will take what it determines to be the next appropriate step. A motion to change the name of the PDAB to the Program Development Team was defeated.

Election Procedures: Gloria Jaffe read the section on elections from the CPTSC Constitution. She also described problems with current procedures for nominating individuals to positions. A motion passed to (1) thank Gloria for her work and (2) ask the Executive Committee to study ways to resolve problems with the nominating procedure and to report its findings at the next CPTSC annual meeting.

Proceedings: Laurie Hayes reported that the 1988 *Proceedings* and the 1989 *Proceedings* should be in the mail by the end of November.

ATTW: Mary Lay and Billie Wahlstrom announced that they are now editing ATTW's renamed journal, the *Technical Communication Quarterly*. The discussion focused on ways to foster the association between CPTSC and ATTW, such as by including articles on programs in *TCQ*.

Publicity: Jim Zappen mentioned that a CPTSC advertisement has been sent to *The Technical Writing Teacher*.

New Executive Committee: Gloria Jaffe announced the results of the election: Sam Geonetta, President; Jim Zappen, Vice President; Sherry Little, Secretary; and Laurie Hayes, Treasurer. The three new Members at Large are Mary Coney, Dan Riordan, and Karen Schriver.

1991 and 1992 Meetings: The 1991 meeting will be in Cincinnati, hosted by the University of Cincinnati; the 1992 meeting will be in Boston, hosted by Northeastern University. Participants discussed possible 1991 meeting formats that would include more

papers. A motion was passed that the upcoming mailing of the PRB questionnaire should include a call for papers soliciting ideas and/or abstracts for conference presentations.

Publications: It was agreed that the primary CPTSC publication will remain the *Proceedings*. There was also considerable interest in a twice-yearly newsletter, one issue after the CPTSC annual meeting and the other after the Executive Committee retreat. The issue following the annual meeting will include a request for information about members' activities, for publication in the next issue. As Vice President, Jim Zappen will be responsible for publications.

Directory of Programs: There was general agreement that an on-line directory of programs would provide a useful service to the profession. Participants also agreed that a good first step would be to collect information on programs from the responses to the PRB questionnaire.

CPTSC Financial Report: September 30, 1989 to September 30, 1990

CREDITS:

Balance from September 30, 1989	$ 3182.40
Additional 1989 dues	$ 175.00
1990 dues	$ 1260.00
TOTAL	**$4617.40**

DEBITS:

Mailing costs	$ 32.70
1987 Proceedings	$ 789.86
1989 Conference	$ 400.00
1990 Executive Retreat	$ 712.00
Database & Mailing Preparation	$ 196.60
TOTAL	**$ 2131.16**
BALANCE	**$ 2486.24**

Major expenditures still due: 1988, 1989 Proceedings
1990 Conference Subsidy

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Lipson

Carol S. Lipson, Treasurer
October 8, 1990

Appendices

Appendix A

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Appendix B

Annual Meetings, Sites, and Dates

1st	University of Minnesota	St. Paul, MN	1974
2nd	Boston University	Boston, MA	1975
3rd	Colorado State Univerwstiy	Fort Collins, CO	1976
4th	University of Minnesota	St. Paul, MN	1977
5th	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	Troy, NY	1978
6th	Oklahoma State University	Stillwater, OK	1979
7th	University of Central Florida	Orlando, FL	1980
8th	University of Washington	Seattle, WA	1981
9th	Carnegie-Mellon University	Pittsburgh, PA	1982
10th	University of Nebraska	Lincoln, NE	1983
11th	La Fonda	Santa Fe, NM	1984
12th	Miami University	Oxford, OH	1985
13th	Clark Community College	Portland, OR Vancouver, WA	1986
14th	University of Central Florida	Orlando, FL	1987
15th	University of Minnesota	Minneapolis, MN	1988
16th	Rochester Institute of Technology	Rochester, NY	1989
17th	San Diego State University	San Diego, CA	1990

Appendix C

1990 CPTSC Officers

President:	Marilyn Schauer Samuels	Case Western Reserve University
Vice President:	Gloria W. Jaffe	University of Central Florida
Treasurer:	Carol Lipson	Syracuse University
Secretary:	William "Sandy" Pfeiffer	Southern College of Technology
Members at Large:	Laurie S. Hayes	University of Minnesota
	Billie J. Wahlstrom	University of Minnesota
	James P. Zappen	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

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THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COUNCIL FOR PROGRAMS IN TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATION
As Amended
Rochester, New York
October, 1989
Page 1

****

ARTICLE I
NAME: The name of the organization shall be the Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication.

ARTICLE II
PURPOSES: The primary purposes of the organization shall be to (1) promote programs in technical and scientific communication, (2) promote research in technical and scientific communication, (3) develop opportunities for the exchange of ideas and information concerning programs, research, and career opportunities, (4) assist in the development and evaluation of new programs in technical and scientific communication, if requested, and (5) promote exchange of information between this organization and interested parties. Said organization is organized exclusively for educational purposes.

ARTICLE III
MEMBERSHIP: Membership shall be open to any individual or institution interested in supporting the purposes identified in Article II. Individuals or institutions whose primary responsibilities or functions are education shall be designated Regular Voting Members. Others shall be designated non-voting Special Advisory Members. Membership shall be open to any person without regard for race, age, sex, or religious affiliation.

ARTICLE IV
OFFICERS: The officers of the organization shall be president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, each to be elected for a two-year term. The duties of the officers shall be:

President:

(1) preside at the annual meeting or special meetings of the organization.

(2) represent the organization at official functions.
(3) serve as chairperson of the executive committee.
(4) designate others to perform duties.

Vice-President:

(1) perform all the duties of the president in the event of the president's absence.
(2) serve as managing editor of all publications.

Secretary:

(1) record official minutes of all meetings.
(2) maintain an up-to-date membership list and mailing lists.
(3) oversee correspondence.

Treasurer:

(1) handle all financial matters of the organization including the receiving and recording of dues and payment and paying the bills of the organization.
(2) transmit current membership information to the secretary on a regular basis.

The president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, plus the immediate past president and three members-at-large, elected by the membership, shall serve as the executive committee. The executive committee shall have the right to act on behalf of the organization at such times as the organization is not meeting at the annual meeting or at special meetings, except to change the constitution or carry out elections.

ARTICLE V
LIMITS: No part of the net earning of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other

private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article II hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying out of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(e)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

ARTICLE VI
MEETINGS:

The organization shall convene an annual meeting. The location and approximate date of the annual meetings shall be determined by vote of members present and voting at an annual meeting. Special meetings of the organization may be held as needed and determined by the executive committee.

ARTICLE VII
FINANCES:

The dues of the organization shall be $20 per year for Regular Voting Members and $100 per year for non-voting Special Advisory Members. Memberships shall be based on a calendar year, and dues shall be payable in January.

ARTICLE VIII
ELECTIONS:

(1) The election of officers and members-at-large to the executive committee shall be by written mail-in ballot. The ballot will have a list of candidates who are members presented by the nominating committee, and all nominations will have secured permission.

There will be more than one candidate, as well as provision for writing in at least one additional nominee for each position open.

(2) The Immediate Past President shall chair the nominating committee and shall appoint, in consultation with the executive committee, four additional members: one from the executive committee and three from general membership, and shall announce committee membership at the annual meeting preceding elections.

(3) The nominating committee will have a slate of officers and members-at-large mailed to the membership no later than 60 days prior to the annual meeting. Ballots must be returned no later than 15 days before the start of the annual meeting.

(4) Results of the election will be announced at the business meeting of the annual meeting.

ARTICLE IX CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS: Proposed amendments to the constitution must be in the hands of the members at least 60 days in advance of the annual business meeting at which the vote is to be taken. The constitution shall be amendable by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting and ballots mailed in to the secretary or proxy ballots from members unable to attend the annual business meeting accepted up to the opening of the annual business meeting.

ARTICLE X DISSOLUTION: Upon the dissolution of the organization, the executive committee shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the organization, dispose of all of the assets of the organization exclusively for the purposes of the organization in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious, or scientific purpose as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the

Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the executive committee shall determine. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

ARTICLE XI
PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY:

All official meetings, of the organization, shall be conducted according to the most current edition of the Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure by Alice B. Sturgis. The presiding officer shall appoint a parliamentarian to advise the assembly at each annual meeting.